NAQCC News

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1. CHALLENGE: Our May challenge is for those who perhaps feel that 5 watts is just too much power. Tom challenges you to make 10 QSO's with 10 different stations while you are using milliwatt (less than 1 watt) power. Those QSO's must be initiated with milliwatt power, i.e you can't call CQ with 5 watts, establish a QSO, then reduce your power to milliwatt levels. A certificate goes to everyone who makes the 10 QSO's. However to be listed on the web site and receive a Participation point, you need only make at least 1 qualifying QSO and report it.

Full Challenge info here.

2. APRIL SPRINT RESULTS: Our April sprint was a record setter. We received 40 logs and had at least 99 stations participating according to calls in the 40 logs. Both are records. There were 629 QSO's represented in the logs, one short of our record set in September 2006. John, K4BAI made the highest score yet in one of our sprints with 4,324 points. We also received 2 more logs after the deadline, so counting those makes 42 logs. I have not yet put those 2 late logs into our master database and probably won't since they were both received via regular mail, but those would put us over the record number of QSO's and probably over 100 participating stations. This was despite competing against another club's sprint at the same time. We certainly appreciate our members' loyalty to the NAQCC. Thank you.

Last year KI4DEF did some interesting research on the ARS Spartan Sprints, probably the best known of all monthly QRP sprints. We have the entire history of those sprints available in Kevin's spreadsheet. Let's compare their sprint to ours. The NAQCC reached the 40 logs mark in its 30th sprint - the ARS didn't reach 40 'logs' until their 38th sprint. In the ARS' 30th sprint they had 21 'logs' submitted. Their 40 'logs' sprint came in 1999 when the bands were really hopping as the last sunspot cycle was approaching its peak. Our 40 logs sprint came, as you well know, virtually at the sunspot minimum. Finally to make this comparison even more

meaningful, the ARS only requires number of QSO's to be reported which takes much less effort than submitting a full log as the NAQCC requires. We are proud of our NAQCC members beyond words!! We are also proud to be playing in the same league as the wonderful Spartan Sprints that we look up to.

Our winners were:

1st SWA - K3WWP
1st Gain - K4BAI
Special Award (Most 40M QSO's) - WD4LST
Top Non-Winner - N8XMS

Congratulations to all including winners and non-winners. Everyone who participated and sent in a log is a winner because the listing of your results on our web site shows the ham radio world that you are interested in preserving CW on the ham bands. That's one of our main goals here at the NAQCC.

We had 19 stations who didn't submit a log show up from 5 to 22 times in the 40 logs we received and cross-checked. Hopefully those 19 and many others will be back next month and submit a log. Perhaps we can crack the 50 log mark in May.

Full sprint info here.

3. LATEST BEAR HUNT NEWS: From our Bear Master Ron, K5DUZ:

Full bear hunt info here.

4. FEATURED AWARD OF THE MONTH: Each month in our end-of-the-month newsletter we are going to talk a bit about one of our awards. This month it's the QSO-A-Day Award. This award was suggested by K4UK and is based on K3WWP's making at least one daily QRP/CW/simple wire antenna QSO for over 4,650 consecutive days dating back to Aug 5, 1994 and still continuing. You don't have to go to that extreme to earn the award though. All you need to do is make 1 or more QSO's a day for various periods of time ranging from 2 months to a full year. Or you can make 2 or more QSO's a day for shorter periods of 1 month or any 30 consecutive days spanning 2 months. And you don't even have to use a simple wire antenna for every QSO like John does, although your QSO's must be CW/QRP of course. Any kind of QSO is acceptable with two exceptions. A regular sked with a station designed to keep the streak alive and a regular net check-in QSO do not count. As always, read and be familiar with the complete rules before embarking on earning this or any award.

Full NAQCC Awards info here.

4a. NAQCC Awards - Fun and easy - by Paul KD2MX: Since joining the NAQCC, I've enjoyed working towards and earning a number of the awards offered by the club. Just recently, I finally worked Japan to make QRP WAC. I've also accumulated enough alphabet prefixes to qualify for the US Alphabet Prefix award.

However, I notice that my call doesn't have much company in the award listings. Aside from the 1000 Miles-per-Watt(MPW) award, few have earned (or more likely applied for) any of the

club's awards. Now many of you may think, "Why bother with another silly piece of paper" or "It is too much trouble to track my contacts" or "It is too expensive".

Now I'm not exactly what you'd call an awards chaser. I've been licensed for nearly 40 years and still don't have a WAS or DXCC certificate hanging on the wall (or even sitting in a drawer). But after a few decades of inactivity, I am now finally getting close.

Earning my NAQCC awards has given me a real sense of accomplishment, achieving recognition for my QRP work while meeting some specific operating goals that were both fun and a bit challenging to reach.

Each award earned has a special meaning to me. One MPW award attests to the thrill I had of working a ZL on 30 meters with 5 watts late one evening. There was nobody on the band but for a faint signal. The QSO was a struggle but we made it, although I didn't really believe it until I received the QSL.

My other MPW award was earned working an AX3 one morning before going to work. It was a quick contact as the AX3 was a special event station. The best thing was that I didn't recognize the prefix so I didn't know I was working Australia. I made the QSO easily, logged it in, looked up the call and almost fell off the chair! It is always a thrill to work the other side of the world QRP and having the certificates helps preserve the memories.

My 30-30 Award is also a special one. It is earned by making 30 QSOs on 30 Meters in a month. It is unique as no other club offers such an award. Earning it really got me into using 30 Meters. It took some effort but it was well worth it and I enjoyed it enough to do it three times to earn the 30-30 Magnum.

The club's 2XQRP and Worked Members awards are intended to recognize our QRP activity. These take a bit of tracking but this is easily accomplished with the use of a spreadsheet. I found and modified some Excel macros to match calls from my logged QSOs with a list of members. I'd be happy to share these procedures with anybody looking for some help tracking their member QSOs.

Our awards are meant to inspire you to get on the air a bit more. I think most hams are goal-oriented and we all generally try harder when there's something specific to be accomplished. So go make 30 QSOs on 30 Meters in a month or work enough club members for an award. Our sprints are a great opportunity to work fellow NAQCCers. You say you've made WAS ten times over. Well have you done it all QRP in this century (or year)?

A log is required for most awards but not QSLs. We're all on our honor to submit legitimate QSOs.

Perhaps some of you balk at the thought of paying for an award. I admit I wondered why I had to pay three dollars for each award when it doesn't cost three dollars to mail a piece of paper. Then I thought about it for a minute.

As John recently pointed out in the newsletter, the club doesn't charge any dues and doesn't sell any memorabilia. Yet there are costs involved in running the club. The website, basic supplies, special awards, etc. all require funding. By participating in our awards program, you will contribute towards helping the club maintain a small treasury, which will be used to support current and new activities.

I hope some of you will take up the challenge of qualifying for one or more of the club awards.

For detailed info, check out the awards section of the website here.

5. GENERAL CLUB NEWS: We would still very much like to have your comments on the new newsletter format since it is still in its infancy. We have received several so far, and all have been positive.

I have recently learned that one of our NAQCC members is a blind op. He would like to be kept up to date via regular mail of our club activities since he doesn't have Internet service. We need someone to volunteer to do so. If you happen to live near Greenfield, Indiana, you might even be able to help out in person or via land-line. The ham is Lou, WA9TPZ. If you can help, contact me (K3WWP) and I'll give you more details.

My talk about finances in the past couple issues seemingly has served its purpose. W2SH, N3IJR, KD2MX, and KB3AAG have come forth with donations sufficient for us to continue the things that we depend on money to do. One thing we are changing because of the donations is providing all certificates free of postage charges. So if you see anywhere on the website something that says a certificate will be sent for 52 cents postage, ignore it. Just notify us according to the rules, and you'll receive your certificate free of charge. I hope to search out and change those statements when I get time. We still charge $3.00 for many of our award certificates though. That remains as always and won't increase, even with the postage rates hike coming in a couple weeks. Thanks to all who have donated in the past, recently, and who will donate in the future. Don't think that we can now go on forever with the funds we currently have though. Your continuing donations are needed to keep the NAQCC a first-class organization. Other than thanking future donors here, this is the last time I'll mention donations until absolutely necessary again. I know how much pleading for money, even in a low key way can annoy.

We are starting 'Band Activity' days trying to increase CW activity on the lesser used bands. Activity will be based on an easy to remember formula. For example 17 meter activity day will be the 17th of the month. More details on this forthcoming.

In the next issue of our newsletter, we will be announcing a very special bonus feature for our June sprint. You won't want to miss out on that!

Other future plans include adding a second classification to our Worked Members Award. Personally I (K3WWP) love the way the award is currently set up with the various points for different types of QSO's. It's somewhat unique among various clubs' similar awards. However most of our members must want something simpler that doesn't require as much effort or thought. So we're keeping the current rules and calling that the Advanced WMA. Then we'll add a Basic WMA with 'no effort or thought required' rules. Incentive awarding??

We've added a sorted-by-call member list to the web site suitable for download and printing if you should wish to do so. It's available via the regular membership list page. That should make it easier for those who don't have computers in the shack itself to still have a member list handy to help work toward our 'Worked Members' awards.

Because of some recent events which I won't describe here, a stronger bond has been forged between the NAQCC and FISTS. We will be doing more to help publicize each other's activities in our common endeavor to preserve, promote, and protect CW on the ham bands.

One spin-off from that bond is a full article in the June issue of WorldRadio magazine about the NAQCC. At the request of Nancy WZ8J, I wrote an 1100 word article promoting mainly the CW

aspect of the NAQCC. The article was then checked by our President Tom, KB3LFC who made some additions and changes. That issue should be available sometime in mid-May. If you're not familiar with WorldRadio (and you really should be), it's a wonderful publication with excellent content. It may not look as glamorous as QST and CQ, but the content is more pertinent and the price is much less.

Remember our on-line newsletters beginning with issue #042 are now archived on the site. So if you missed seeing any past issues, you can check them out in the archives.

6. MEMBER NEWS: This is YOUR section of the newsletter. We want to know what our members are doing with CW and QRP on the ham bands. We present only POSITIVE news here, and only news concerning QRP/CW. Brag about that new rare country you worked last week. Tell how you finally worked KL7 to finish your 40 meters WAS. Share your excitement in working halfway around the world to Australia with 100 mW. Tell us how you built that new little QRP rig or keyer paddle from scratch. Give us the URL to your brand new CW/QRP web site so we can all take a look. Do a review of your K1 you just finished building.

We've received the following news items for this issue. Is yours among them? I'm sure you've done something newsworthy that you want to share with your fellow members, so come on and send that news to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**.

From Jim K7TEM #1782 I have just become a member of NAQCC. I have enjoyed CW for over 40yrs now and was so surprised to have my son ask me to teach him the code. He is 12yrs old and is just a natural on the hand key. I find him practicing several times a day. Believe me there will be another CW man real soon. TNX 72/73's Jim Weaver K7TEM

From Paul KD2MX #1091 My Rock-mite is on the air so I'm ready to give the May Challenge a try. I've managed one qso so far but it is definitely a different experience to be under strict crystal control. Please listen for my tiny signal around 7039.

From John K3WWP #0002 I am having a ball with our April WARC Bands Challenge. 17 and 12 haven't done much for me, but 30 meters has been good enough for me to earn my 4th 30-30 award. Also the band has provided me with a few good solid rag chews toward the NAQCC Spring Rag Chew Award. Many times the band is too up and down to hold a station for 30 minutes, but at other times it can be quite stable enough to do so. I hope you all are having as much fun as I am with these two (three) activities.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless you specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.